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Red meat production makes important contribution to SA economy

Red meat production accounted for 23.1% of the total gross value of South Australia's agricultural production in 2008-09 according to a report released today by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

Adversely impacted by multiple periods of drought and poor market conditions for wool, the number of sheep in the South Australian flock has fallen from 18 million in 1990 to 10 million in 2009; the lowest level since 1950 when the flock numbered 9.5 million.

Beef production in South Australia averaged 22,200 tonnes per quarter between 1979 and 2007. Over the same period the volume of lamb and pig meat production more than doubled and exceeded beef production for the first time in the December quarter 2007.

In the June quarter 2010, South Australia produced 4.9% of Australia's beef (including calves), 21.3% of Australia's lamb (excluding sheep) and 26.1% of Australia's pig meat.

Livestock production makes up a large proportion of the economic activity undertaken in regional South Australia. The South East Statistical Division (SD) accounted for a quarter (25.0%) of the value of all meat production in the state in 2008-09 while the Adelaide SD only contributed 2.4%.

At the commodity level the South East SD dominates both cattle and sheep production accounting for 53.1% and 26.7% of the respective commodity values.

The full article and SA specific updates on Construction, Housing Finance and International Merchandise Trade can be found in the August edition of SA Stats (cat. no. 1345.4) available for free download on the ABS website.

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